

**Charter Township of Comstock
Parks & Recreation Commission**
Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2017
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Linda Law, Judy Joling, Teresa Young, John Weir, Sharon Spears
Staff Present: Vanessa Street, Parks Director and Rachel Hopkins, Parks Program Coordinator
Citizens in attendance: 2

Call to Order by Chairperson, Linda Law

1. Review of the Minutes from February 13, 2017:

Motion by Weir/support from Spears to accept Minutes as presented.

Motion to approve Minutes: 5 Yes/ 0 No

2. Bills Payable:

Motion by Weir/support from Spears to approve Bills payable as presented.

Motion to approve Bills Payable: 5 Yes/0 No

3. Correspondence:

A 'Thank You' card from Kathy Dilsaver to Parks Director Vanessa Street was received for the expeditious falling-tree removal at Green meadow Park near her adjacent property/shed before damage could occur.

A letter was received from Dr. Kenneth Kornheiser of the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council concerning Comstock Creek flow concerns/dams at Cooper Park and Peer Park; in the two cases fish passage may be impaired from run-off and eroding shoreline, respectively.

4. Citizen's Comments: A citizen asked for clarification on where to locate recent meeting minutes on the Township's website.

5. Request for Agenda Adjustments: None

6. Reports:

a. Parks Director: Provided to Commissioners in Board packets

b. Treasurer: Report provided in packets

c. Commission Chair: None

7. Business:

a. Joint Township Survey Questions

Sample Survey question ideas from Oshtemo, Texas, and Comstock Townships were provided for review and discussion by Parks Director Vanessa Street. Commissioners may email their survey question ideas & comments to Vanessa.

b. 2017 Programming (see attached)

2017 currently planned programming was provided by Parks Director Vanessa Street. Included this year is a proposed "Joint (4-districts: Portage City, Kalamazoo City, Kalamazoo County, and Comstock Township) Free Day", scheduled for June 21st, 2017.

Motion by Weir/support from Spears to approve the June 21st, 2017 day as fee-free day at Robert Morris Park.

5 Yes/0 No

Future programming possibilities for 2018 were also provided by Vanessa for consideration.

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c. Facebook Page

Parks Director Vanessa Street provided information proposing establishing a Comstock Parks and Recreation Facebook page to enable better communication with residents and non-residents. Parks Director Vanessa and Parks Coordinator Rachel Hopkins would be the facebook page Administrators, and anticipate posting information on the site ~once/month. The page would have a link to the Comstock Township website.

Motion by Joling/support from Spears to approve creation of a Comstock Township Parks and Recreation Facebook page
5 Yes/0 No

d. Purchasing Approval – Woodchips

Parks Director Vanessa Street provided a quotation for the purchase of woodchips for Robert Morris Park and Wenke Softball Complex playgrounds. Both playgrounds lost woodchips due to water “wash-outs”.

Motion by Spears/support from Young to approve purchase of the woodchips for the playgrounds.
5 Yes/0 No

e. 2017 Park Visits (see attached)

The Comstock Township Parks and Recreation Commission Board must visit parks (at least) once per year. A 2017 Park Visit Schedule for May through August was provided by Commissioner Linda Law. The respective monthly Parks and Recreation Commission meeting will be held after each visit. Commissioners are asked to take notes of their visits.

Motion by Weir/approval from Joling to approve schedule as presented.
5 Yes/0 No

f. Fishing Deck (Continuing) Discussion

As requested, Commissioner Teresa Young shared published research information regarding potential problems with bait fish transfers/resulting in invasive species, and noted there are some simple control approaches available (can request DNR input).

She also noted that current information on the Campbell Lake fishing resource is needed, but that the northern pike present is non-native. A citizen in attendance concurred, noting that there are fewer blue gill since the pike showed up, relating a story of inadvertent pike introduction from a bucket years ago.

Other discussion items will be covered at future meetings.

g. Other

Commissioners present discussed meeting-notification and improving overall communications.

8. Announcements: None

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15 P.M. Next meeting will take place on Monday, April 10 at 7 P.M

Respectfully submitted, Teresa Young, Secretary

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2017 Park Visit Schedule

May – Commissioners should visit the Jan Schau Wildflower Walk, River Villa Preserve, and visit the community garden on your own time before the May 8th meeting. May meeting at Township Hall at 7:00pm.

June- Meet at Wenke Softball Complex at 6:30pm. Meeting to follow at Wenke Softball Complex Pavilion at 7:00pm. (Please visit Fleetwood Park at Green Meadow Park on your own before the meeting on June 12th)

July- Meet at Robert Morris Park at 6:30pm, with meeting to follow at 7:00pm at Robert Morris Park Pavilion. (Please visit McLinden Nature Trails on your own before the meeting).

August – Meet at Merrill Park at 6:30pm, with Meeting to follow at 7:00pm at Merrill Pavilion. (Please visit Celery Street Park, Cooper Park, Peer Park, Neal St Ball Diamonds, and North & South Wenke Parks before the August 14th meeting on your own).

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2017 Current Programming

Galesburg Kids Walking Club

- Partner with Galesburg Augusta Primary School & KRVT
- 6 week program in the spring and fall Thursdays after school (3:15-4:30pm)
- Track steps with pedometers, provide nature hunt activities, and supervise 1 mile walk.
- At the end give kids certificates with their total steps taken for the 6 week period

Senior Walking Club

- Partner with Comstock Community Center
- One day a week – late morning.
- 6 week program
- Track steps with pedometers, provide walking bottles, or t-shirts through possible sponsor/donations.

Community Garden

- 12 ft. X 4 ft. raised bed plots (12 total)
- \$10 a plot (money goes back to the community center to cover the cost of water)
- Plants provided by local greenhouse donations
- Partner with Master Gardeners to provide informational workshop for new gardeners.

Softball

- Co-ed league Monday nights, mens league Wednesday nights, 60+ senior league Thursday nights, and 75+ senior leagues Monday mornings.
- 14 week season
- Concessions are open during game times 5-10pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays

Baseball Leagues & BPA (Baseball Players Association) Tournaments

- 11U, 12U, 13U, 14U teams
- 8 week long double header season Tuesday and Thursday evenings
- BPA tournaments run every weekend starting in April for 12 weeks
- Concessions are open during game times 6am-7pm Saturday and Sundays, and 5-10pm Tuesday and Thursdays

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Future programming possibilities...for 2017

Joint Free day

- Wednesday June 21st, 2017
- Portage City, Kalamazoo City, Kalamazoo County and Comstock Township
- Portage will also only have one park available (Ramona Park)
- More staff available on Wednesday rather than weekend day – County will only do a weekday.
- Save on advertising
- If all four districts are visited that day patrons will be entered in a drawing
- Each park will be in charge of their own activities/programs that day
- Grow awareness of RMP and bring Portage and Kalamazoo residents to Comstock
- Activity possibilities
 - Scavenger hunt
 - Bowling
 - Pinecone bird feeder
 - Chalk
 - Volleyball
 - Disc Golf
 - Wiffle ball
 - Bubbles
 - Corn Hole

Fall Kickball

- Tuesday or Friday evenings at Wenke softball complex
- Coed recreational league
- Team t-shirts
- 6 week program
- Use softball umpires

Harvest Day

- Saturday or Sunday October 7th-8th 14th-15th 21st-22nd
- Partner with a local cider mill or farm (Gull Meadow Farms) to get hay, pumpkins, apples, donuts, and cider
- Partner with Comstock Library for kids crafts
- Comstock fire truck
- Activity possibilities

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pumpkin painting
pumpkin putt-putt
Witch hat ring toss, cauldron toss
can knock over
sack races
pumpkin bag toss
bowling
find the apple/pumpkin/candy
cut out photo booth
tic tack toe
Hay maze

- Have donuts, apples, and cider separately or part of entrance fee (free)
- Apply for temporary food license \$90
- Fun day to end the season
- Advertise for Comstock residents
- Entrance fee?

Story Time/Nature Walks

- Partner with Comstock Library's current Story Time activities.
- Read a nature book to children along the KRVT or at a Park, take kids on nature walk to collect natural items to use as craft project back at the Library or under park pavilion.

Movies in the Park

- Partner with Comstock Library (Library has movie license)
- Project family friendly films in Robert Morris Park
- Provide popcorn (temporary food license needed - \$90)

Adult Outdoor Crafts

- Partner with library to bring their adult crafts outside to Merrill or RMP pavilions